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**DOE Gives Mission Support Alliance Top Safety Award**

*Contractor's mission support services receive top marks for safety in DOE program*

**RICHLAND, Wash.** — The Department of Energy (DOE) has awarded contractor Mission Support Alliance (MSA) Star Status in the (DOE) [Voluntary Protection Program](#) (VPP) for its mission support services. This status is the highest safety honor a contractor can receive through DOE's VPP Program. The star recognizes MSA's mission support services group for excellence in employee safety and health programs.

The program promotes safety and health excellence through cooperative efforts among labor, management, and government at the DOE contractor sites. DOE has also formed partnerships with other Federal agencies and the private sector for both advancing and sharing its VPP experiences.

"The safety and health of contractor and federal employees is the Department's highest priority," said Matt McCormick, DOE Richland Operations Office Manager. "We commend Mission Support Alliance and its employees for making sure co-workers are safe while on the job at Hanford."

MSA's Safeguards and Security organization also received VPP Merit Status, recognizing their highly effective safety programs and commitment to attain the more prestigious Star Status within five years. The MSA-managed HAMMER Training Facility has maintained VPP Star Status since September 2002.

"This is a great achievement for all those involved," said Frank Armijo, MSA's president and general manager. "It clearly demonstrates the commitment from both MSA management and workers for performing safe and secure conduct of operations on the Hanford Site."

"Receiving VPP Star Status exemplifies the collaborative working environment we have within MSA's management and work force," said Rocky Simmons, an MSA Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council (HAMTC) safety representative. "It definitely was a team effort and reveals quite a bit about the sound safety culture here at MSA."

VPP recognizes contractors and workers who have implemented effective safety and health management systems and maintain injury and illness rates well below the national Bureau of Labor averages for their respective industries. DOE uses VPP as a tool for promoting excellence in safety to prevent fatalities, injuries and illnesses through five tenets focused on hazard prevention and control, worksite analysis and training, management commitment and worker involvement.

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